

Participatory parity in schooling and moves towards ordinariness: a comparison of refugee education policy and practice in England and Sweden

Joanna McIntyre, School of Education, University of Nottingham, UK

Sinikka Neuhaus, Institutionen för utbildningsvetenskap, Lund University, Sweden

Katarina Blennow, Institutionen för utbildningsvetenskap, Lund University, Sweden

This work was supported by seed funding from The University of Nottingham and Lund University

Abstract

Within the current global refugee crisis this paper emphasises the fundamental role of education in facilitating the integration of young new arrivals. It argues that a humanitarian crisis of such scale requires a commensurate humanitarian response in the form of socially-just educational policies and practices in resettlement contexts within Europe. Utilising the theoretical concepts of Fraser's 'participatory parity' and Kohli's 'resumption of an ordinary life' we explore educational policy making in Sweden and England, noting how the framing of these policies indicates how different nation states view their role in the global migration crisis. In England, child refugees are rendered invisible and not a legitimate focus of national educational policy whereas in Sweden they are foregrounded in policy discourse though not necessarily in policy enactment. The paper concludes that newly arrived future citizens of Europe require socially-just policy and practice to best serve their and their resettlement context's best interests.

Key words

Refugee education, policy, resettlement, forced migration, social justice

Introduction

Globally, we are experiencing unprecedented forced migrant movement. This affects both refugee communities and communities where uprooted people are resettling. Children are at the heart of this with more child refugees in Europe than at any point since the Second World War (Save the Children 2016). A humanitarian problem on this scale demands a humanitarian socially-just response. Children in transit have already been at risk of trafficking, violence and forced labour (ibid). It is unlikely that a child who reaches a place of safety will return and thus it becomes incumbent upon the resettlement context to help the new arrival to settle, integrate and begin the process of leading a meaningful life in their new home society. For young refugees, education is fundamental to integrating into their new context and the act of going to school is a facilitating factor in newly arrived young people's resumption of an everyday existence after periods of trauma and upheaval. However whilst children have rights to education in their new context these rights are experienced differently depending on where the refugee child resettles.

This article therefore examines how policies and practice in two differing European contexts allow children experiencing forced migration to access and engage with education. Our focus is on children making the journey to resettle in Sweden and England. We explore how schools work with newly arrived children in England, which historically has been both focus and locus for immigrants, and compare this with Sweden where largescale immigration is a newer phenomenon. Given the numbers migrating into Europe these differing perspectives contribute to understanding the role of education in national and European responses to the global problem of forced migration. Policies and practices in these two contexts which facilitate, or obstruct, new arrivals living an everyday life and participating in education are examined

through a social justice lens. The theoretical concepts 'participatory parity' (Fraser 2003) and 'resumption of an ordinary life' (Kohli 2014) are relevant to our focus as we assess the nature of each state's policy response. Before explaining the relevance of these concepts to our analysis, we describe the context for the work and articulate its importance at this point in the European context.

In the current global context there are reportedly 66.5 million displaced people (UNHCR 2017). Many of these are making arduous journeys into Europe and it is increasingly clear that this situation is unlikely to change. European nations are therefore developing means of responding to the challenges associated with resettlement as the demographics of individual places shift. We draw on a broader study that seeks to understand the educational experiences of new arrivals in Europe though our focus in this article is on how two European states are responding to the presence of such children through national policy making and enactment. In what follows we variously refer to these groups of children as newly arrived (nomenclature in the Swedish context) and asylum seeking/refugee (ASR) children (nomenclature in the English context). As educational research on new arrivals often has a one-sided national perspective (e.g. Nilsson Folke 2017), we explore how this issue is simultaneously experienced in two differing European contexts. This contributes to understanding how a specific global issue impacts local/national environments. We have mapped educational policy regarding newly arrived/ASR children in both countries, using the comparison as a mirror/clarifying perspective. Seeing English policy in the light of Swedish policy and vice versa provides insight into characteristics of national contexts, which otherwise might not be visible. From this comparison, a picture emerges of an England without recent national refugee education policy documentation albeit within a historical context of schools with a tradition of

compassion and support for new arrivals (Pinson, Arnot and Candappa 2010); and a Swedish context with plentiful national policy guidance, yet accompanying concerns about policy enactment at local level because of a lack of experience in interpreting the documentation.

Bauman (2004) suggests there are conflicting processes that states adopt for coping with new arrivals: those that lead to assimilation – to becoming ‘us’; and those that further distance and make the newcomer even stranger. He describes refugees as ‘the human waste of globalisation stripped of all other identities but one – that of being stateless and statuslessness.’ (2004). Over half of the 22.5 million refugees are under 18 (UNHCR 2017) and therefore do have status: that of ‘child’. Thus they have rights to education under the Convention on the Rights of the Child as reflected in international commitments, the global educational goals enshrined in the United Nations’ Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4, committing all countries to ‘ensure inclusive and quality education for all and promote lifelong learning’ (UN 2015).

These ‘big policies’ are translated or recontextualized at the national and local level through (enactments of) government policy discourse that supports either the assimilation – the likelihood of becoming ‘us’ and ‘dissolving into place’ - or the distancing that Bauman identifies (Ball 1998; Bauman 1996). Understanding the positioning of the newly arrived within localised and national policy discourses illuminates the values and processes of political decision making (Ball 1998, 124). We view policy and policy implementation as acts of social justice or injustice as we explore below.

Previous research into refugee education draws on differing theoretical perspectives to better understand the issues and associated complexities of the experiences of

new arrivals in distant resettlement contexts. For instance, Rutter (2006) and McBrien (2010) employ Bronfenbrenner's ecological theory to explore differing contextual influences; Madziva and Thondhlana (2016) utilize Tikly's capabilities-based quality education framework to conceptualize Syrian children's experiences in the UK education system; Parker-Jenkins, Francia and Edling (2016) compare UK and Swedish treatment of Muslim migrants in educational policy utilising Kumashiro's 'education for the other' framework; and Novelli draws on Foucault's 'boomerang effect' to critique the ways in which education for new arrivals has been used as a tool for countering terrorism (2017). Clearly this is not an exhaustive list but we are mindful of Pinson and Arnot's observation that ASRs' education is an under-researched area (2007). Similarly we consider Dryden-Peterson's directive that research seeking to compare experiences of the newly arrived in different contexts should ask: 'how to realize the right to education for all and ensure opportunities to use that education for future participation in society?' (2016, 473).

In this article we draw on two differing theoretical concepts which we believe offer a framework for considering whether policies and practice offer a socially just response to the demand for education for all alongside a sociological reading of how these can cohere to allow individuals to lead ordinary meaningful lives participating fully in their new society.

The theoretical concepts 'participatory parity' (Fraser 2003) and 'resumption of an ordinary life' (Kohli 2014) are therefore relevant to our focus as we assess each state's policy response to new arrivals in Sweden and England.

'Participatory Parity'

The term 'participatory parity' encompasses Fraser's understanding of social justice which is predicated on socio-economic (distribution), cultural (recognition) and political (representation) dimensions (2003). These are manifested through the ways in which a society ensures there is an equal distribution of resources, the extent to which different groups' cultural experiences are recognised and how different groups claim for their rights to be represented in the political system. For the focus of this article, the distribution of resource would be the extent to which new arrivals are able to access education both in policy terms and in practice. Within this, there needs to be recognition of the needs of different groups of refugees, and importantly of different individuals within these groups, and for these to be culturally responsive without stigmatising or othering the child from the rest of society. To avoid misrecognition, policies and processes need to ensure that ASR children can access and engage in educational experiences that allow participation on a par with others. Considering these concepts together can help to develop a socially just response. Further, to avoid misrepresentation, political obstacles to participatory parity need to be avoided, such as policies and decision-making process that marginalise and exclude newly arrived children from their right to an education.

Fraser utilises the device of a frame to understand how national policies can be considered in relation to global issues. Comparing the framing of policies and practices in Sweden and England is key to this article. Policies are official responses to perceived problems and issues. A key problem for individuals affected by the current migration crisis is how they experience the implementation of these national responses in the everyday acts of becoming ordinary in their new context.

'Resumption of an ordinary life'

Kohli draws on Bauman's notion of 'dissolving into place' in his articulation of young asylum seekers' transitions towards an ordinary life. Access to education and dissolving into the place of school is a key indicator of becoming ordinary and through this lens we view policies relating to education for new arrivals in England and Sweden. Kohli's analysis drew on his study asylum seeking children's journeys from a series of temporary refuges to settlement in their new home contexts. He conceptualised these journeys as a series of movements across geographical spaces, across time, and maturational and psychological transitions (2014). These movements are experienced at different speeds. As ASR children become part of their new societies they take time to acclimatise, to adapt, to participate, to absorb, before finally contributing as full members of the community (ibid, 313).

Kohli argues that becoming a forced migrant signals the 'death of everyday life' (Kohli 2014, 87). Rebuilding this everydayness becomes imperative once a resettlement destination is reached and the geographical movements have ceased. The journey to an 'ordinary life' is dependent upon several intersecting contextual factors. These include the individual's own strengths and aptitudes, previous experiences and future goals but also the 'scaffolding provided by others' (ibid). National policies and their enactment locally dictate the structure of this scaffolding in new 'home' contexts, and therefore the nature of the journey towards everyday ordinariness and routine.

This informed our methodological approach, as a precursor to the ethnographic work with young people in the broader study, a comparative analysis of documents and procedures in Sweden and England was undertaken to analyse current barriers and opportunities for young new arrivals at the level of policy as they seek to resume a sense of everyday life through schooling. This included documents available on government websites, legislative bills and associated documentation and advice

provided for schools. The purpose was to understand the positioning of the newly arrived within national educational policy discourses and so attention was paid to references to provision for ASRs in the policy documentation. Our approach was informed by critical discourse analysis as we paid attention to both context and language to allow for a focus on how particular discourse may or may not privilege individual actors. The analysis which follows resulted from reading and re-reading of the texts to identify the representation and (in)visibility of ASRs within policy discourse. We are mindful that what counts as policy is a matter of context and that policy is both text and discourse (Ball 2015), in that schools and those actors within them enact policy in particular ways whilst at the same time they are formed and re-formed by policy (ibid, 307).

We now compare Swedish and English policy responses to new arrivals and analyse current barriers and opportunities for young new arrivals as they seek to resume a sense of everyday life through schooling.

Moves in education towards an ordinary life - *An English perspective*

There are no accurate data on the numbers of ASR children in England (NALDIC 2017). Reasons for this lack of clarity include not least ambiguity about what information needs to be collated to ascertain accurate numbers (Ryan et al 2010). What is on record is the number of unaccompanied children requesting asylum in England. Reported in quarterly government statistics, this number totalled 1166 in May 2017 (Refugee Council 2017). The Home Office also keeps data on asylum seeking families in receipt of welfare support. This data shows that there were 5332 asylum seeking children of school age (5-18) recorded at the end of December 2015 (Price 2017). However there is no one single government department collating data

on children who are either asylum seekers or who have been granted refugee status and, obviously, there is no record of children who are in the country illegally. For these reasons it becomes impossible to track how many new arrivals there are in English schools.

In England, there has been no specific policy about the education of ASRs since the then Labour government published guidance on supporting new arrivals in 2007. Within this, ASR pupils were part of the 'Every Child Matters' policy discourse and entitled access to the National Curriculum (DCSF, 2007). The two successive governments of 2010 and 2015 have not published any further policy guidance specifically aimed at provision for new arrivals. Instead, the policy focus has been on the progress of pupils generally. Refugee and asylum seekers are not identified as a discrete group within school curriculum, assessment data, or welfare policy discourse. It might be inferred that they are included within policy discourse about 'vulnerable groups' and 'EAL' (a widely used term for children with English as an additional language). Until 2014, Ofsted (the national school inspection body) published guidance on good practice in relation to provision for new arrivals with English as an additional language. However these examples have now been removed from the government website.

Unaccompanied asylum-seeking children who enter the country with no family are classed as 'Looked after Children', meaning that the state assumes responsibility for their care through the Local Authority. However, the changing role of Local Authorities in recent years ensures they now have little direct autonomy over schools, following policy moves in England from 2000 onwards to encourage schools to become 'academies' with direct funding and accountability relationships with the state. Despite these significant structural changes, responsibility for agreeing a Fair

Access Protocol with schools - to establish equitable procedures for ensuring children are given school places - remains at local authority level. This must include provision for ASRs, who if they have been out of formal education for two years or more or are unaccompanied, should be given high priority (DfE 2014a). Thus, in England, since the 1996 Education Act the local authority has had responsibility for ensuring that all children, including children of asylum seekers and refugees, have access to education, and for tracking the progress of looked after children, including unaccompanied ASR children. Despite this local authorities have limited power to intervene if a child is not accessing education or is failing to make appropriate progress.

In England, as elsewhere, the labels 'refugee' and 'asylum seeker' are important. Refugee children are more likely to be in education in a school than asylum-seeking children and more likely to have access to full time educational provision (Anderson, Claridge, Dorling and Hall, 2008). There are two groups of ASRs who have triggered specific policy responses in the form of separate programmes and provision of support.

The first, the Syrian Vulnerable Person Resettlement Programme (VPRP), was introduced in 2014 in response to the Syrian crisis. This signalled a shift in government response from supplying aid to neighbouring countries of Syria to support refugees seeking sanctuary in the bordering states, to a specific package of support aimed at Syrians seeking refuge in the United Kingdom. The government's previous position had been to discourage people from making dangerous journeys across Europe and so wished to avoid moves that would allow ASRs to enter the country following this route. Since July 2017 people entering under the auspices of the VPRP are automatically given refugee status. The VPRP is a targeted support

programme where individuals are assigned to local authorities before arriving in England. The first 12 months of this support are paid for by central government funds and includes:

a meet-and-greet service at the airport, accommodation and assistance in accessing welfare benefits, education, employment and other integration services in accordance with a personalised support plan for the refugees' first 12 months in the UK.

(McGuinness 2017, 20)

Because of the 'wrap-around' care offered by the VPRP, children entering under the scheme are more likely to be in full time education than other groups of ASR young people.

The second group of ASRs receiving specific provision are those supported by what is known as the Dubs amendment (section 67 of the Immigration Act 2016) which gives unaccompanied children in Europe the right to enter the UK. Initially it was thought that 3000 children would benefit from the scheme but in reality fewer than 350 have entered the country, and those who have are mainly from the 'Jungle', a temporary refugee camp in Calais. On arrival they are entitled to make an asylum claim following the usual processes. If they do not qualify for asylum,

and it is clear that safe and adequate reception arrangements are not available in their home country, they will be granted leave to remain under the Immigration Rules for 30 months or until they reach the age of 17 and a half, whichever is shorter

(ibid, p.15)

Like other unaccompanied ASRs, children entering the UK under the Dubs scheme have no special provision for access to education other than that provided for Looked after Children in the local authority.

The absence of ASR children in English education policy discourse is notable. This lack of visibility within policy could imply that ASR children are not treated any differently from other children and as such it might be argued that the very absence is what makes them ordinary. However the effect of this invisibility in educational policy discourse is to situate policy about ASR children within legislation on immigration and the associated welfare policies of housing and benefit systems. The children's experiences are shaped by policies within the 'immigrant control trajectory' and 'welfare trajectory' which position ASR young people as 'untrustworthy children' who might also be 'damaged children' requiring rehabilitation (Watters 2008, 3). ASR children are thereby positioned as 'problems' and in need of dispersal (ironically, away from areas with a history of accommodating immigrant communities such as London and the South East of England). For these children there has been little change in England since Arnot et al observed in 2009 that 'a migrant child is first and foremost a migrant' (Arnot et al 2009). As migrants, ASR children have to navigate layers of administration which serve to prevent them from quickly 'dissolving into place'. In this context, the label of refugee/asylum seeker itself becomes a barrier to young new arrivals being able to quickly transition to an 'ordinary life' in their new context.

Successful integration into school for ASR children begins with bureaucratic procedures associated with housing. Families or unaccompanied minors arriving in England awaiting assessment of their refugee/asylum status are housed in emergency accommodation. If the family is given leave to remain they then have 28

days to find accommodation. This often cannot happen within the allotted timeframe, so the family moves into temporary accommodation or local authority sanctioned housing managed by private landlords or companies. Often children will then face long journeys to school on public transport and, where there is more than one child, this can involve paying for travel to different schools in different areas which on limited resources can prove a real barrier for some families. In the case of unaccompanied children, local authorities are provided with funding to pay for housing and social service support.

Once the child has an address, they can apply for a school place through the local schools' admissions processes. If a school cannot be found this way and the child has been out of education for two months or more, the case is referred to the local authority Fair Access panel which decides which school the child should attend. Schools have a two week period in which to appeal the decision. Schools might argue they have no room for a new arrival. An additional complication is that children arriving after October in year 11 (age 15-16) will attract no funding to the school, so in-year ASR entrants find it difficult to access schooling because of the financial implications for schools.

Furthermore, if the child's accommodation is temporary there may be reluctance to find the child a permanent school place (Anderson et al 2008, p. 30). Families and unaccompanied children have little say in decisions regarding housing or schooling. In practice they are usually placed in areas of high deprivation with high rental accommodation, and schools in these areas are often undersubscribed and unpopular (Rutter and Jones 2001). For ASR children who have already experienced 'maturational and psychological transitions' at different rates than other children

during their period of displacement, this delay in resuming the commonplace act of going to school regularly is particularly difficult.

Once a school place is given, assessment of the child will be carried out by the school. Depending on the school's structures the school will try to accommodate the child in the mainstream, based on their ability to communicate in English. An ASR child will often have limited documentation about their prior education experience, aptitude and capabilities. This prevents holistic assessment of the child's educational level being made. Wrong decisions about which groups children should be placed in can have long-lasting implications for academic progression and for settling within appropriate peer groups (Arnot 2016). In this way ASR students' status as 'EAL' dominates other elements of their identity, a marker of their 'extraordinariness'.

Accessing the full curriculum is often an issue for ASR young people as schools focus attention primarily on supporting proficiency in English through targeted EAL support. This may be an intervention programme where the child is removed from mainstream curriculum or through differentiated in-class provision. The focus is on acquiring English and often the child's first language is not encouraged in the classroom.

The anonymity of the designation 'EAL' can lead to ASR children being treated as a homogenous group with little variation of provision for prior and individual experiences. This, and the current emphasis on the progress agenda in schools in England within a rigid curriculum offer means that the individual needs and potential educational assets of an ASR child (including bilingualism) can be lost. This is particularly marked for children over the age of 14, the age group of most unaccompanied children. In the upper school years English secondary schools face

substantial pressures to perform well in league tables of examination outcomes. ASR children will experience a limited curriculum largely made up of English Language or other intervention classes designed to equip those with the necessary English competence to pass a narrow range of examination subjects.

This issue of curriculum access is particularly acute for young people in the 16-18 age group, where they may be required to attend ESOL classes in a further education college. ESOL (English for speakers of other languages) provision in post-16 settings, is usually aimed at adults adapting to life in Britain. These classes have long waiting lists and 16-18 year old ASRs are required to access these before they can begin to study other subjects, rather than do them concurrently. Anecdotally, we know of 16 year olds who have been required to wait up to 10 months before accessing college places as a result of ESOL waiting lists. The difficulties of access to education for 16-18 year old ASRs is compounded by lack of statutory duty for post 16 colleges to enrol such students (Kendall, Gulliver and Martin 2008, 18). Consequently, many older newly arrived ASR children in England will not have access to the breadth of curriculum offered to their peers.

Schools in England have statutory responsibilities to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children (HMSO 2016, 5). ASR children may feel out of place especially if their cultural practices are at odds with those promoted in the English school system. For others it will be important to acknowledge the trauma they have faced and the need for targeted support to help them adapt to their new life, with different norms and expectations. This is made more difficult if ASR children are seen as one homogenous group and if labels such as EAL conceal the ways in which different groups and individuals might adapt to processes in English schools.

In 2015, the Prevent policy was introduced requiring schools to promote 'British values' (DfE 2014b). Prevent is part of a coordinated strategy to stop involvement in terrorism. Concerns have been raised about teachers having to report children at risk of radicalisation (e.g. Novelli 2017). Simultaneously there has been increased anti-immigrant rhetoric in the popular press. It has been contended that Prevent has 'stigmatised' some communities, 'blatantly contradicted ...multiculturalist policy' and represented a significant securitization of British society (Thomas 2016). Novelli argues that it is 'a mechanism through which to attack multiculturalism and push a far more assimilationist agenda, which by its very nature stigmatises immigrant communities' (2017, 11). It is also pertinent to ask why these values are ascribed as 'British' rather than 'human' and what this means for new arrivals?

Thus, in the English policy context, the return to an ordinary life for young new arrivals is protracted and schools' efforts to support smooth transitions are hindered by alternative policy concerns linked to the school improvement/ accountability agenda and to securitization measures.

We now explore the situation in Sweden.

Moves in education towards an Ordinary Life - A Swedish perspective

The Swedish Migration Agency publishes statistics showing the number of children seeking asylum per year. In 2015, there were 70384, including 35369 'unaccompanied' children seeking asylum, in 2016 this reduced to 10909, including 2199 'unaccompanied'. The numbers are similar in 2017 (Migrationsverket 2017). However, these figures are unlikely to be accurate with estimates of 2-3000 children living 'sans papiers' in the country (though the number is probably higher)

(Skolverket 2015, 10). So it is difficult to ascertain how many newly arrived students are in education.

Global migration has influenced Swedish society on many levels, especially education. A cross party refugee agreement in 2015 outlined policies for ensuring that all schools be prepared to receive newly arrived students (Proposition 2015/16:184, 12), that Municipalities should place students in a range of schools to avoid segregation and that support for students in their mother tongue should be provided. In addition, the agreement required teachers to receive training in educating newly arrived pupils (ibid.). Thus the refugee agreement of 2015 signaled an intent to introduce a range of measures to support the integration of the newly arrived into schools.

The 2011 Education Act underlies the foundation of the Swedish school system in general and by extension, policy about education for newly arrived children. Since 2015, when the migratory flow of children peaked, education policy documents regarding access, reception and organization of learning for newly arrived children has grown. Policy about the Swedish school system is characterized by notions of inclusion and the right of all students to education. There is a tradition of emphasizing the role of schools in deepening democratic governance and fostering democratic citizens. The school system's strong focus on the democratic mission has been described as exceptional, since more curriculum hours are devoted to it when compared with most European countries (Hakvoort and Olsson 2014). Newly arrived pupils are expected to be involved in all of this and to participate fully alongside their Swedish peers as part of everyday life experiences in school.

As in England, the newly arrived have little choice about where they accommodated. For a range of reasons, newly arrived children can be forced to move to a different municipality, sometimes in another part of the country. However, in Sweden, no matter where the newly arrived live, there is swift access to schooling such that each child should be enrolled in a school within a month after arriving in the country (SFS 2011, 185, , SFS 2010, 2039) and every child, irrelevant of status (including the 'sans papiers') has a right to schooling. Often the child has access to a school immediately.

In response to the increasing number of people seeking asylum in Sweden in 2015, the Swedish parliament passed a temporary law restricting the possibility of obtaining permanent residence permits (SFS 2016, 752). This included the possibility of a permanent permit should the applicant prove that they had employment or their own business and could be financially independent. After the law was enacted, there was concern that older children would target employment rather than school, in order to get a permanent residence permit. So, in March 2017, the government introduced a Bill allowing unaccompanied youths longer temporary residence permits if they study at an upper secondary level (gymnasienivå), on condition that they conduct themselves well, participate actively in school and pass examinations (SFS 2017, 353). The Bill was passed in May and the act gained legal force in June 2017. The explicit motive of the Bill is to prevent newly arrived students from dropping out of school to get a job. Hence the policy can be read as a step to secure access to education. However, the Bill also signals an implicit motive that students who are successful in school and conduct themselves well and are able to earn their living can stay in the country.

In the preparatory work on the Bill, teacher unions and MPs voiced concerns that it risked putting pressure on teachers in school, as teachers were worried that if they reported attendance figures and grades there was the risk of a student of theirs being deported (Sydsvenskan 2017).

In 2016, the National Agency published general advice regarding the education of newly arrived students (Skolverket, 2016). This focused upon progression within the system which is articulated as a 'prioritized' or personalized curriculum. In the first year for the newly arrived, this allows more time for Swedish as a Second Language (SSL) at the expense of time in other subjects and the possibility to attend a preparation class with extra language support and skilled SSL teachers (ibid, p. 13).

The Agency make references to current research on translanguaging, the importance of using the individual's strongest language, a focus on the strengths of the student, on what they can do rather than what they cannot do (ibid. p. 31). There is an emphasis on the importance of social contact with other students of the same age, for instance as a factor for deciding where to place the newly arrived student (ibid, 26). The newly arrived child should have a say in decisions, for example in choosing when it is time to move from compulsory school to an introductory programme at an upper secondary school (ibid, 25). The National Agency for Education also recommends that introductory classes, which is where many newly arrived students start their education in Sweden, should have a central location in the school building, for social reasons (ibid, 31). Thus whilst accommodating newly arrived children's specific needs there is also an intent to facilitate rapid acclimatisation and transition through opportunities for interactions with their peers in an ordinary school. However our conversations with teachers and young people on these introduction programmes suggests that in reality there is little opportunity for

interaction as the newly arrived are taught in separate classes. Interactions are only likely during social times such as lunch where children tend to stick to their established friendship groupings.

The same document stresses the importance of mapping the knowledge and skills of individuals and their educational background to make long term plans for the placement and education of each student. The importance of demonstrating knowledge in the preferred strongest language is stressed. There is a possibility of sitting national examinations if a student shows that they have reached the knowledge-goals of compulsory school. The publication also draws attention to the fact that many newly arrived students have work-experience and that the knowledge that stems from this experience should be recognised and made use of in schools (ibid, 36). However, our anecdotal evidence is that head teachers find that the system's strong focus on the national syllabi (characterised by goal-and assessment management by objectives) is not flexible enough to utilize the experiences of the children, (e.g. from their school-background in other countries, or from their professional experiences) in the ways described in the documentation.

The labels of 'refugee', 'asylum-seeker' and 'sans papiers' are important in the Swedish context, as is the status of child. A child has more rights and access to support in the asylum-seeking process, with access to healthcare, to special housing, and to a guardian, alongside the right to education, though whilst asylum-seekers can start upper-secondary education up until the age of 18, refugees with a permanent residence-permit can do so until the age of 20.

The age, or the estimation of age, of a person thus means a great deal in access to education. In cases where the asylum-seeker cannot prove their age by

documentation, government agencies estimate the age. This process has been criticised as arbitrary by international organisations as well as practitioners in the field. If the child's age is re-estimated to 'over eighteen' deportation can be triggered immediately. Children see this happen to others in the same housing or the same school and worry that the same may happen to them (Mikkelsen and Karlsson 2016).

In Swedish policy, access to schooling is also provided for children 'sans papiers'.

This contains guidance on how the school can protect the child from being revealed to the police. Instructions to schools include asking for the child's mobile number rather than their address, along with giving the child or the family notice if the police are coming to school on other business and keeping hard copies of the child's grades locked away (Skolverket 2015). The guidelines for police carrying out deportations state that children should not be searched for or removed from in or around a school (RPSFS 2014, 82). That said, children have been collected by the police from schools in Sweden. Activists report that many paperless families do not know about the right to schooling and there have also been reports in the media about families under the threat of deportation who do not dare to send their children to school, especially since the police have begun to ask for addresses of 'hidden families' from social services (Mikkelsen 2016). According to the Swedish Aliens Act (SFS 2005, 716), social services have to give the information to the police upon request.

This articulation of policies and practices illustrates that there is a commitment by the authorities in Sweden to help schools support newly arrivals to transition quickly into their new way of life through rapid access to schooling with consideration of how best to accommodate their individualised needs. However there are concerns about

how this translates into practice and the ways in which the police exercise their powers to remove those without appropriate documentation.

Discussion –achieving participatory parity through education and ordinariness

The foundation for security is winning the legal right to remain in a country, but beyond that

asylum- seeking children begin to feel safe in the day to day by finding predictable patterns, shapes and rhythms of living, by being in a good school, ...finding trust- worthy, reliable and companionable people, adults and peers.

(Kohli 2011, 317)

What are the ‘predictable patterns, shapes and rhythms’ of young ASR people’s experience of education in England and Sweden?

Policies frame solutions to perceived ‘problems’ and so the positioning of refugees and asylum seekers in and out of official discourse in each of our contexts is of importance. In England there is a history of supporting children who have arrived in schools as a result of forced migration (Rutter 2006) whilst in Sweden responding at scale is a relatively new phenomenon. Initial comparisons of educational policy demonstrate that, perhaps unsurprisingly, there is a great deal of policy documentation and guidance for Swedish schools to help them to provide for the new influx. It is somewhat surprising to find that in England, despite there being a tradition of immigration, particularly in London, the south east, and the large cities, there is no recent policy focusing on refugee education given the rise in global migration. The framing of these policies, and their enactment in practice, illustrates whether they serve to allow new arrivals to fully participate on an equal basis in all

aspects of society, in this case education, or whether they are marginalised or excluded.

The three concepts of redistribution, recognition and representation are interlinked and all are necessary for participatory parity (Fraser 2003) which we argue is key to these young people resuming an ordinary life alongside their new peers in their resettlement context. First we discuss the ways in which mechanisms and bureaucracies in England and Sweden function to allow equal or unequal distribution of access to appropriate education provision. Second we consider how ASRs' cultural, linguistic and socio-ecological experiences are valued and recognised in both contexts. Finally we consider whether new arrivals are included or excluded and given access to social communities through education or whether some are misrepresented and denied the possibilities of acting as equals with others in their new contexts through the ordinary interactions of school life.

The 'big policy' - of entitlement to education in the resettlement country as enshrined in SDG4 - is differently experienced by children arriving into England and Sweden due to mechanisms and processes that need to be negotiated in order to enable a child to be in school. In both countries there are bureaucratic turns that must be navigated before a child can access to education, though in Sweden there is commitment for these to be progressed quickly or simultaneously. In England there are points where children can be held in the system before accessing schooling. There are advantages within the Swedish system in terms of speed of access though there are also risks as embodied by the need for schools and educators to learn how to protect those 'sans papiers' from police eviction.

In England, the label of ASR is more visible than that of child; children are prevented from becoming 'ordinary' by immigration policies and discourses which position them outside the system. Absence of policies about education of refugee/asylum seeking children renders them invisible and not a legitimate focus of the agenda. Instead policy discourse foregrounds the progression of individuals or specific labelled groups such as EAL, vulnerable, pupil premium, special educational needs. ASRs may fit into one or more of these groups but they are not specifically included.

Children within the English education system are meticulously tracked and monitored for evidence of progression using external measures of achievement. Since 2010, government strategy has been to promote a school-led system of improvement with reluctance to promote particular approaches or policies. This has led to a policy vacuum about practice. Simultaneously there has been an increase in the ways in which school performance is measured. The focus has moved from every child mattering within English education discourse (ECM, 2003) to paths of 'social mobility' tracked through progression and attainment. ASRs are outside this discourse, since their progress is only measured if they have been in the country for two years. So again they are prevented from being treated as ordinary and made extraordinary because of their ASR status.

This is in marked contrast to the Swedish system where *because* of their identification as newly arrived, they are quickly provided with access to education and, unless unaccompanied, this provision extends to the whole family with daily SSL provision. Sweden is characterised as a 'social' nation state promoting 'order of equality' where society has 'common, communal value' (Bauman 2011, 16) protecting individuals from 'silencing, exclusion and humiliation' (ibid). The newly arrived are visible in Swedish policies especially those relating to education. In

England, where there are complex immigration bureaucracies to be negotiated, ASRs are paused in an exclusivist strategy which separates and effectively silences them.

However in both contexts, once in school there are various ways in which their new countries employ inclusivist strategies to assimilate them and begin blurring some markers of their otherness (ibid 2012, 103). In England this is most marked by the EAL strategy. This can be perceived as a move towards monolingualism where the goal is for English to replace the first language. Functioning in the country's main language is of course an indicator of ordinary life in the resettlement context.

In Sweden bilingualism is valued and promoted in policy discourse which emphasises the importance of translanguaging and in which the assessment of what the child brings with them can be based on their strongest language. This valuing of the home language is an important example of how resettlement countries can signal recognition of the child's culture, history and language. This has benefits both to the individual and their growing sense of belonging, and to their new community as the child is more likely to feel they have something of worth to offer. Gandara describes potential bilinguals, with their awareness of how different cultures think and present themselves, as assets to their resettlement context because they act as 'powerful bridge builders in a world that is fundamentally global' (2017). However this will only be a mark of ordinariness if bilingualism is actively promoted as desirable for all groups in society. In countries such as Sweden, the ability to switch between languages is not extraordinary.

However if the policies extant in the macrosystem place limits on access to education through a series of complex bureaucracies, the child is less likely to

experience these concepts of recognition and instead could feel there is no place for them in the ecological framing of their new environment. Understanding the ways in which different structures and processes interact to form barriers or to offer access to young ASR is an important thread within the literature on refugee education (Rutter 2006, Pinson and Arnot 2007). Analysis of these structures requires understanding of personalised history and circumstances and how individuals relate to the worlds/contexts that surround them. Bronfenbrenner conceives this as an ecology, a web of concentric systems (1979). When considering ASR education provision, a socio-ecological approach is required which considers the (non) status of them within and across these systems.

At the individual level, ASRs will have encountered particular psychological and physical experiences, and may have undergone traumatic changes to their family support network. Their peer group will be changed, and may consist entirely of other refugees. In Sweden, the importance of social interaction with peer groups beyond other newly arrived is evident in the requirement to locate introduction classes within ordinary schools. However there needs to be opportunities for there to be interaction with Swedish children beyond the introduction classes. An individual ASR child's socio-ecological system is clearly an important factor in their transitions to resuming a sense of ordinariness in their new context initially marked by their sense of belonging to school, an institutional representation of the new country and a gateway to a range of social worlds.

For ASR children access to an education system which allows them to resume their academic studies quickly and to begin to interact with peers in their new context is especially important. They will bring with them different experiences and will have developed different coping mechanisms which may or not be transferable to the

demands of schooling in their new place. Whilst exile 'strip[s] refugees of their anchors at the centre of the web' (Rutter 2006, 39), schools are important spaces where healing can happen and where individuals can adjust to life in new contexts.

Schools are representations of macrocosms of society and sit within a system of bureaucracies and technologies of local and national government. Schools and the teachers within them are often required to interpret and mediate policy. In England education policy is dominated by accountability of academic performance and progress. As such children's lives out of school are not always prioritised in policy and children in school are labelled as homogenous groups. In Sweden more policy space is given to a holistic approach to the whole child. Thus Sweden appears to be taking a more ecological approach to consider individualised provision, at least at the level of policy. How this is enacted in practice is still to be seen.

The broader study referred to earlier is beginning to unearth this practice more clearly. In some parts of Sweden the influx of new arrivals has been extremely high whilst elsewhere there has been less impact. We focus on a locality in Sweden where schools have had to respond quickly to enact the policies outlined above. In England, our focus is on a city with a tradition of immigration and inclusive, multicultural anti-racist education. This adds to existing research exploring teachers' compassionate, caring approach to newly arrived children within a context of national media hostility (Arnot, Pinson and Canmdappa, 2009) and to recent data which indicates that 'EAL' children outperform others in localities with a history of supporting children from migrant backgrounds (Freedman 2018). The policy comparison therefore of a hostile current climate in England versus an apparently generous compassionate Swedish climate can only ever be a partial view of opportunities and barriers to young ASR children's experiences of access to a quality

education. Nevertheless this does provide insight into the ways in which nation states view their role and response to the global issue of forced migration.

Conclusion

Our exploration of the education landscape reveals that at the level of policy, England and Sweden are at different points in providing access to education for new arrivals. The framing of these policies demonstrates how the different nation states in this case study view their role in the global migration crisis outlined. Policies are ideological responses to particular conceptions of issues. In England there is a tendency towards representation of ASRs as an immigration and security problem and as such technologies associated with limitations of movement, access and control are prominent, whilst ASRs are absent from education policy. The policy maker as ‘conjurer’ is at work here, representations of ASRs as vulnerable children do not accord with discourses of threat as manifested in popular media, and they have been magically disappeared, ‘now you see it now you don’t’ (Ball 1998) whilst responsibility for control and surveillance has been managed out to immigration agency workers, and to those tasked with following the Prevent Strategy.

The exception to this invisibility is VPRP policy targeted at Syrian refugees. This policy was developed partly in response to public outrage about what was represented by the Government’s slow response to the Syrian crisis (most marked by public reaction to the photograph of three year old Allan Kurdi’s body after he drowned making the journey from Syria to Europe). So in English policy and practice, one group of ASR children are given swifter access to education and support to ordinary aspects of English life whilst other groups of newly arrived young people are treated differently and have to overcome policy barriers inherent in immigration

bureaucracies. In addition, ASRs potentially are perceived as risks to school performance data, which positions them as being extraordinary, especially as they attract no additional resource.

In this way, schools in England have to respond to an implicit 'national ideology' (Van Zanten 1997) which positions ASR (adults) as a threat along with an absence of direct policy about the education of young people newly arrived in the country.

Therefore if schools are to offer a socially just response they need to interpret policy into practice in their own ways. In contrast, the visibility of the newly arrived in Swedish life, including education, is part of a 'national model' (ibid) an explicit ideology recognising the public interest served by welcoming new arrivals in a country with a small and ageing population in need of a skilled future workforce.

There is a national need for the newly arrived to assume ordinary lives in the Swedish context as rapidly as possible. It is perhaps too soon to know how this is being interpreted in the daily experiences of schools and the newly arrived. This suggests that in England there is a misframing of young refugees as they are rendered invisible (and thereby not ordinary) and voiceless in educational policy. In Sweden, where there has been a national recognition of the potential benefits refugees bring to society, there is a seemingly more socially just framing at least at the level of policy.

There needs to be an element of caution about offering a simplistic binary view and a recognition that policies are not a representation of enacted practices. As has been stated earlier, the English government has strategically limited policy documentation favouring a specific pedagogical approach as this runs counter to a school-led system. However given the tradition of movements of different groups into English cities over the years, there is a wealth of experience of supporting new arrivals.

There are numerous examples of ‘good news’ stories about refugees’ experiences of education in England. Nonetheless, the dispersal policy has meant that many ASRs are arriving in locations where support for new arrivals is a relatively new phenomenon and/ or where funding cuts have led to the loss of experienced support. In Sweden, at a national and local level, responding to the needs of a number of new arrivals is a relatively new phenomenon and there has been a flurry of policy reflecting this. It is less clear how this is enacted in practice. And at the time of writing, there are small but significant challenges to the public discourse of welcome as right wing extremists are finding spaces to offer a counter view.

It goes without saying that political landscapes affect policy development. In England, a history of delegating decisions to local government led to regionalised diversity with multicultural and antiracist expertise in some parts of the country as mentioned above. Recent changes to local authority jurisdiction have led to even greater diversity as individual academies make their own decisions about policy implementation and enactment often with no connection to local authority education services. In contrast, Sweden’s history of centralized control of schooling made reforms compulsory. Arguably these different political backdrops have resulted in a form of ‘useful invisibility’ of ASR children in England and potentially lip service support for the newly arrived in Sweden.

In both contexts, practitioners are working to understand how best to support ASRs. The journey to an ordinary life is contingent on a number of intersecting contextual factors of the new ‘home’ country as well as the experiences of the children seeking to become ordinary in their new place. There is a need for research on the newly arrived in Europe that draws on a ‘sociological imagination’ (Pinson and Arnot 2007) to drive humane, socially just policy and practice to best serve the needs of young

people who have 'given up their past in order to have a future' (Kohli 2014, 85); children who, at the point of becoming forced migrants and refugees, stopped experiencing an everyday existence.

References

Anderson, K., Claridge, J., Dorling, K. and Hall, E. 2008. *The Right to Education in England: Alternative report to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child*.

Children's Legal Centre: Essex.

Arnot, M., Pinson, H. & Mano Candappa. 2009. "Compassion, caring and justice: teachers' strategies to maintain moral integrity in the face of national hostility to the "non-citizen", *Educational Review*, 61 (3): 249-264.

Arnot, M. 2016. "Empowering the newly arrived within mainstream schools" May 18th 2015.

<http://kva.screen9.tv/media/gpBr3Jf-ukSyPxCvhWmUdA/empowering-the-newly-arrived-within-mainstream-schools>.

Ball, S. (1998). Big Policies/Small World: An introduction to international perspectives in education policy, *Comparative Education*, 34 (2), 119-130.

Ball, S. 2015. What is policy? 21 years later: reflections on the possibilities of policy research, *Discourse: Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education*, 36 (3), 306-313.

Bauman, Z. 1996. "Assimilation into exile: The Jew as a Polish writer", *Poetics today*, 17 (4): 569-597.

- Bauman, Z. 2004. *Wasted Lives: Modernity and Its Outcasts*, Polity Press: Cambridge.
- Bauman, Z. 2011. *Collateral Damage: Social inequalities in global age*. Polity Press: Cambridge.
- Bronfenbrenner, U. 1979. *The Ecology of Human Development: Experiments by nature and design*. Harvard University Press: Cambridge.
- DCSF. 2007. *New Arrivals Excellence Programme Guidance*. HMSO: London.
- DfE. 2014a *School Admissions Code*. HMSO: London.
- DfE (Department for Education) 2014b. Guidance on promoting British values. <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/guidance-on-promoting-british-values-in-schools-published>. Accessed 13/11/2017.
- Fraser, N. 2003. "Social justice in the age of identity politics." In Fraser, N & Honneth, A. 2003. *Redistribution or recognition? A political-philosophical exchange*. Verso: London. pp. 7-109.
- Freedman, S. 2018. EAL students now outperform native speakers across all GCSE measures. Why? Available at <https://www.tes.com/news/school-news/breaking-views/eal-students-now-outperform-native-speakers-across-all-gcse-measures>. Accessed April 4 2018.
- Gandara, P. 2016. *Educating Immigrant Students and Emergent Bilinguals (In an Anti-Immigrant Era)*. AERA Centennial Lecture New York. 30 November 2016.
- Hakvoort, I., Olsson, E. 2014. The School's Democratic Mission and Conflict Resolution: Voices of Swedish Educators. *Curriculum Inquiry* 44(4): 531-552.

Kendall, Gulliver and Martin, 2008. *Supporting asylum seeking children*. CfBt: Reading.

Kohli, R. 2011. "Working to Ensure Safety, Belonging and Success for Unaccompanied Asylum-seeking Children." *Child Abuse Review* 20: 311–323.

Kohli, R. 2014. Protecting asylum seeking children on the move. *Revue Europeene des Migrations Internationales*. 30 (1): 83-104.

McBrien, J.L . 2010. The importance of context: Vietnamese, Somali, and Iranian refugee mothers discuss their resettled lives and involvement in their children's schools. *Compare*, 41(1): 75-90.

McGuinness, T. 2017. *The UK Response to the Syrian Refugee Crisis*. House of Commons Library: London.

Madziva, .R. & Thondhlana, J. 2017. Provision of quality education in the context of Syrian refugee children in the UK: opportunities and challenges, *Compare*, 47(6), 942-961.

Parker-Jenkins, M., Francia, G. & Edling, S. 2016. Education for the other: policy and provision for Muslim children in the UK and Swedish education systems, *Compare*, 47(2), 257-270.

Migrationsverket (2017): <https://www.migrationsverket.se/English/About-the-Migration-Agency/Facts-and-statistics-/Statistics.html> Accessed 7/12/ 2017.

Mikkelsen, J., Karlsson, J. M. 2016. "Tusentals barn görs vuxna utan bevis i det svenska asylotteriet." *Helsingborgs Dagblad*, 4. December.

Mikkelsen, J. 2016. Barn röjda av socialtjänsten gömmer sig i skogen. *Sydsvenskan*, 3. December.

NALDIC. 2017. website <https://naldic.org.uk/the-eal-learner/groups/refugees-asylum-seekers>. Accessed 19/11/2017.

Novelli, M. 2017. Education and countering violent extremism: Western logics from south to north? *Compare*, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/03057925.2017.1341301>. Accessed 14/08/17.

Pinson, H & Arnot, M. (2007) Sociology of education and the wasteland of refugee education research, *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, 28 (3), 399-407.

Price, R. 2017. *Access and attainment for refugee children*. Paper presented at Education Policy Institute. 18/7/2017.

Pinson, H., Arnot, M. and Candappa, M. (2010) Education, Asylum and the 'Non-Citizen' Child: The Politics of Compassion and Belonging, Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan.

Proposition 2015/16:184. *Fler elever i fler skolor*. Stockholm: Utbildningsdepartementet.

Refugee Council, 2017.

https://www.refugeecouncil.org.uk/assets/0004/0488/Asylum_Statistics_May_2017.pdf

RPSFS 2014:82. *Rikspolisstyrelsens föreskrifter och allmänna råd om verkställighet av beslut om avvisning och utvisning*. Stockholm: Rikspolisstyrelsen.

Ryan L., D'Angelo, A., Sales, R. and Lopez Rodriguez, M. 2010. *Newly arrived migrant and refugee children in the British educational system*. Social Policy Research Centre: Middlesex.

Rutter, J. 2006. *Refugee children in the UK*. Open University press: Maidenhead.

Rutter, J. and Jones, C. (2001) *Refugee Education: Mapping the Field* Stoke on Trent: Trentham Books.

Save the Children. 2016. "Children on the move in Europe".

<https://savethechildreninternational.exposure.co/children-on-the-move-in-europe>.

Accessed 12/01/2108.

SFS 2005:716. *Utlänningslag*. Stockholm: Justitiedepartementet.

SFS 2010:2039. *Gymnasieförordning*. Stockholm: Utbildningsdepartementet.

SFS 2011:185. *Skolförordning*. Stockholm: Utbildningsdepartementet.

SFS 2017:353. *Lag om uppehållstillstånd för studerande på gymnasial nivå*.

Stockholm: Justitiedepartementet.

Skolverket. 2015. *Elever som är papperslösa – rätt till en likvärdig utbildning*.

Stockholm: Skolverket.

Skolverket. 2016. *Utbildning för nyanlända elever*. Stockholm: Skolverket.

Sydsvenskan. 2017.. Lärare: Inga gränskontroller i klassrummet. 5. May.

<https://www.sydsvenskan.se/2017-05-03/larare-inga-granskontroller-i-klassrummet>

Thomas, P. 2016. "Youth, terrorism and education: Britain's Prevent programme.

Youth", *Social Crisis and Learning*. 35, (2): 171-187.

Van Zanten, A. 1997. "Schooling immigrants in France in the 1990s: success or failure of the republican model of integration?" *Anthropology and Education Quarterly*, 28, 351-374.

Watters, C. 2008. *Refugee Children*. Routledge: Abingdon.

United Nations 2015. 2030 Agenda for sustainable development.

<https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/education/>. Accessed 19/11/17.

UNHCR. 2018."Global resettlement needs".

<http://www.unhcr.org/uk/protection/resettlement/575836267/unhcr-projected-global-resettlement-needs-2017.html>. Accessed 19/11/2017.